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THE

TWO STORY MITTENS

AND THE

LITTLE PLAY MITTENS:

BEING

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE SERIES.

BY

AUNT FANNY,

AUTHOR OF THE SIX NIGHTCAP BOOKS, ETC.

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055 # 66

I DEDICATE

THESE TWO STORIES AND THIS LITTLE PLAY

TO MY FRIEND

MR. FRANK A——,

who makes fun of me before my face and speaks well of me behind my back.

I don't mind the first a bit; and as long as he continues to practise the second, we will fight under the same flag.

LONG MAY IT AND HE WAVE!

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MORE ABOUT THE MITTENS.

THE mittens were coming bravely on. Some evenings, Aunt Fanny could not send a story; and then the little mother read an entertaining book, or chatted pleasantly with her children.

There had been twelve pairs finished, during the reading of the third book, and several more were on the way. George had written the most delightful letters, each of which was read to his eagerly-listening sisters and brothers several times, for they were never tired of hearing about life in camp.

This evening, the mother drew another letter, received that day, out of her pocket. The very sight of the envelope, with the

precious flag in the corner, caused their eyes to sparkle, and their fingers to fly at their patriotic and loving work.

"Attention!" said the mother in a severe, military tone. Everybody burst out laughing, choked it off, immediately straightened themselves up as stiff as ramrods, and she began:

"DEAR MOTHER, CAPTAIN, AND ALL THE BELOVED SQUAD:—Our camp is splendid! We call it Camp Ellsworth. It covers the westward slope of a beautiful hill. The air is pure and fresh, and our streets (for we have real ones) are kept as clean as a pin. Not an end of a cigar, or an inch of potato peeling, dare to show themselves. Directly back of the camp strong earthworks have been thrown up, with rifle pits in front; and these are manned by four artillery companies from New York. Our commissary is a very good fel-

low, but I wish he would buy pork with less fat. I am like the boy in school, who wrote home to his mother, his face all puckered up with disgust: "They make us eat p-h-a-t!!" When I swizzle it (or whatever you call that kind of cooking) in a pan over the fire, there is nothing left of a large slice, but a little shrivelled brown bit, swimming in about half a pint of melted lard, not quarter enough to satisfy a great robin redbreast like me; but I make the most of it, by pointing my bread for some time at it, and then eating a lot of bread before I begin at the pork. The pointing, you see, gives the bread a flavor."

The children screamed with laughter at this, and wanted to have some salt pork cooked immediately to try the "pointing" flavor. Their mother promised to have some for breakfast, and went on reading:

"We are very busy at drills. I give the

boys plenty of field exercise, quick step, skirmishes, double quick, and all manner of manœuvres. After drill, we sing songs, tell jokes, and *play* jokes upon each other, but we don't forget, in doing this, that we are *gentlemen.*

"Oh dear mother, I am crazy to be in action! I am afraid, if we don't have a battle soon, I shall get motheaten. Our General is a glorious fellow, and is just as anxious as we are to have it over; peace will come all the sooner. Hollo! Here comes "Tapp," and I must blow out my half inch of tallow candle, and go to bed.

"Good-by, all my dear ones. Love and pray for your affectionate son and brother, GEORGE."

"Ah!" sighed the children, as the mother folded up the letter. Then they were silent, thinking of the dear brother

who wanted so much to be in the dreadful battle; and the little mother was looking very mournful when there came a ring at the bell.

The servant handed in a package, which proved to be a story from "Aunt Fanny." It came very fortunately; and the mittens grew fast, as the little mother read the interesting history of—

THE PARTY LILLIE GAVE FOR MISS FLORENCE.

THE PARTY LILLIE GAVE FOR MISS FLORENCE.

"Oh, mamma, please *do* buy me a new doll," said Lillie, one day in June.

"Why, how you talk!" answered her mother. "What has become of your large family?"

"Oh, mamma! Minnie, the china doll, has only one leg, and my three wax dolls are no better. Fanny has only one arm; both Julia's eyes are out; and the kitten scratched off Maria's wig the other day, and she has the most dreadful-looking, bald pate you ever saw! Instead of its being made of nice white wax, it is nothing but old brown paper! I think it is

very mean not to make dolls' bald heads like other people's! Then I could have dressed Maria up in pantaloons, and made a grandfather of her. But now she is fit for nothing but to be put in a cornfield to scare away the crows."

Lillie's mother laughed, and kissed her lovely daughter, who had not met with any of the terrible misfortunes that had befallen her wax and china family. *She* had both her round and chubby white arms; and two pretty and active legs, that made themselves very useful in skipping and jumping from morning till night; and just the prettiest golden brown wig you ever saw. It was fastened on so tight, that the kitten, with all her scratchings, could never twitch it off; in fact, every single hair was fastened by a root in her dear little head, and fell in soft, natural curls over her dimpled cheeks.

That very afternoon, her mother went

out shopping; and looking in at a toy shop window, she saw a splendid wax doll nearly three feet long. It was dressed up in all manner of furbelows, but the dress did not look half so fresh and lovely as the doll. The arms and hands were all wax, round, pinky-white, and beautifully shaped, with two cunning dimples in the elbows, and four little dimples in the back of each hand. She had dark curling hair, large blue eyes, and very small feet.

"Well," said the loving mother to herself, "I really *must* try to get this splendid doll for my darling Lillie." Her own gentle blue eyes quite sparkled at the thought of the happiness such a present would bring with it. So she walked quickly in, and asked the price.

Oh dear! It was twenty dollars!

This was more than the mother thought right to give for the doll; and she told

the man so, very politely. He was a very wise man, and what is more and better, kept a toy shop, because he loved children dearly; so he put his head on one side, and thought; then he looked out of the corner of his eye at the lady, and saw what a pleasant, sweet expression was on her face; then he thought again—this time, how disappointed the sweet little girl at home would be, if she knew her mother was out looking for a doll for her, and came home without one; and then he said, "What do you think the doll is worth?"

Lillie's mother told him what she considered a fair price, and the darling, good toyman spoke up as quick as a flash, "You shall have it, ma'am! Here, John, put this doll in paper, and take it to 'No. 13 Clinton Place.'"

Lillie's sister Helen was going to spend the summer with her dear grandmamma in

Middletown. A splendid idea came into the kind mother's head. Taking Helen into a room alone, she said, "My dear, you will want some sewing to do, while you are away; suppose you take the beautiful doll and make up several suits of clothes for her, just as neatly as possible. I am sure your grandmamma will help you; and when you return, we will have a delightful surprise for Lillie."

The darling, good sister, was just as pleased as possible with this plan: indeed, she had not got past liking to play with dolls herself; and she was very different from some elder sisters, who take an unamiable pleasure in teasing the younger ones, instead of joining in their plays, and doing everything to add to their happiness. So the doll and all sorts of pretty muslins and silks, and materials for under garments, were mysteriously packed away in Helen's trunk, and she

Helen's Grandmamma helping her to make the Doll's Clothes.

went off to her grandmother's pleasant country house, without Lillie's having the slightest suspicion of what she was going to do. She was very busy all summer making the clothes, with her grandmamma's help. Many of the pleasant mornings she sat on the steps of the door, listening to the singing of the birds as she sewed.

And now this is a very good place to tell you about Lillie and her sisters; for she had three dear sisters—Helen, Mary,

and sweet little Maggie; and no brother at all. The only one she ever had, went to live with Jesus in heaven, after staying only fifteen months here in this world.

You know already what a kind mother the children had; and I am very certain their papa loved them just as much. When he is with them, his dark, bright, and piercing eyes droop and soften into an expression of so much affection, that one day, when I was visiting at his house, I caught myself repeating the words of a perfect little poem, which seemed to have been written expressly for him. It is so beautiful, and describes the children so well, with the change of one or two words, that I have ventured to copy it here for you. It was written by Gerald Massey.

"There be four maidens; four loving maidens;
Four bonny maidens, mine;
Four precious jewels are set in Life's crown,
On prayer-lifted brows to shine.

Eight starry eyes, all love-luminous,
Look out of our heaven so tender;
Since the honeymoon glowing and glorious
Arose in its ripening splendor.

"There's Lillie bell, the duchess of wonderland,
With her dance of life, dimples and curls;
Whose bud of a mouth into sweet kisses bursts,
A-smile with the little white pearls:
And Mary our rosily-goldening peach,
On the sunniest side of the wall;
And Helen—mother's own darling,
And Maggie, the baby of all."

The summer was passed by our dear little Lillie in playing and frolicking, and sometimes tearing her frocks; which last, her mother minded not the least bit, as long as it was an accident. I don't, either. Children had better tear their frocks a little, jumping, climbing over fences, and getting fat and healthy, than to sit in the house, looking pale and miserable. My Alice often comes in, a perfect object to behold! I sometimes wonder the rag-

man, who drives the old cart with a row of jingling bells strung over the top, don't mistake her for a bundle of rags gone out for a walk. I don't feel *worried* about it; for if he *should* happen to make this mistake, and pop her in his cart some day, Alice would make one of her celebrated Indian "yoops," as she calls it, and I rather think he would pop her out, quicker than she went in.

When September had come, Helen returned home; and soon after, the mother said, "Lillie, there is a young lady in town, who wishes to make your acquaintance. She is quite grand and fashionable in her ideas, so we must make a little flourish for her. What do you think of having a party to receive her?"

"A party!" screamed Lillie, clapping her hands with delight; "I would like that *very* much; and oh! please have candy, and oranges, and oh! mottoes—

lots of snapping mottoes for the party! That would be most delightful! And please ask Nattie, and Kittie, and Lina, and Emily, and oh! everybody."

"You must ask them yourself. See, here is a quantity of pretty buff and pink note paper, and here is a nice new pen: sit down and write your invitations."

This was a tremendous business! and Lillie, spreading herself in great grandeur, with her head on one side, took the pen and wrote very nicely, *for her*, all the notes, in this way:

"Miss Lillie B—— wishes you To Come to A party to-morrow to Meet A young Lady. Her name Is—i Don't Know Yet. Please Come At Seven-o-Clock. LILLIE."

Then she doubled them up into little squares, and put them into the envelopes;

and Margery, the maid, who loved Lillie dearly, and *would* have rode off with the notes on a broomstick to Jerusalem, if her little lady had wanted her to—trotted about all the morning, leaving them at the children's houses, telling the waiters who answered the doors, on no account to stop a single moment, but rush right up stairs with them, as they were of the greatest importance.

The next morning, Lillie got all the answers. I should think there were about twenty little notes, all directed to her. Was ever anything known to equal it? A lady getting so many letters at once! It was almost too much happiness. They did not all come at once, which was very lucky; for I do believe Lillie would have gone crazy with delight. She opened the first with trembling eagerness, dancing up and down the whole time, and read these enchanting words:

"dear lillie—

"i will come. i shall wear my best frock—what a funny name the young lady has. miss don't know yet

"good bye. yours, NATTIE."

"Oh, mamma," she cried, laughing, "Nattie thinks the young lady's name is 'Miss Don't Know Yet!' How funny! But really, what is her name, mamma?"

"She will tell you that herself, when she comes. She wants to surprise you."

"Oh!" said Lillie; and just then another note was handed to her, and she read this:

"DEAR LILLIE:—Mamma is writing this note for me, and she says—I accept your invitation with much pleasure. So I do, certainly. What delightful fun it is to go to a party! I wish you would have one every week.

"Your loving friend, KITTY."

"Oh, mamma"—Lillie was just going to ask her mother to let her have a party every week—when Maggie brought another note. This was from a young gentleman, and was as follows:

"Master Russell is coming to Your Party; and I will Eat all the plum Cake, and bring A pack of Crackers In my pocket —to fire off in honor Of Miss Doughnut.

"Yours affectionately,

"Sam Russell."

Lillie thought this was a splendid idea! It would be such an honor to the young lady to receive her with popping a pack of crackers at her, just as they fire off cannon at the President when he comes to town.

"Oh, how enchanting it is!" she cried, and she jumped up on a chair and jumped down again three times running, she was so happy.

Everybody was coming, and all wrote notes very like those I have told you The weather was beautiful, and, for a wonder, everything went just right.

Long before seven o'clock, Lillie was dressed and in the parlor waiting for her little friends. She got very impatient, and was just beginning to think they never meant to come; or had all been naughty, and were sent to bed instead of going to a party, when the door bell rang —then again—then again—and a moment after a little troop of laughing, lovely children skipped into the room, all talking together, and all running to kiss Lillie at once; so that not a quarter of them could find a place on her sweet, happy face, and had to wait for their turn.

Then some nice little boys came in, with their faces scrubbed so clean they fairly shone, and their hair parted down the middle behind so very even that the

seam looked like a streak of white chalk. They went up to Lillie very bashfully, and shook hands; and then all got together in a corner, because you see they were afraid of the girls, and imagined that they were making fun of them.

But after a little while this fear seemed to fly up the chimney, for boys and girls were playing "turn the platter," and "hunt the ring," and the larger ones were dancing; and everybody was having the most delightful time possible.

Dear little rosebud Maggie was the happiest of any, for she was to sit up until every scrap of the party was over; so everybody kissed her, and played with her, and showed her how to turn the platter, and she skipped and danced; and that dear little chuckling, singing laugh of hers was heard in every corner of the room. The fact is, Little Maggie is one

of my particular darlings. Don't tell anybody.

But where was the young lady all this time?

Lillie had scarcely thought of her, she was so happy with the dear little friends she knew and loved. Of course a stranger could not expect to have the same place in her loving heart, especially as she had not yet had even the first peep at her.

Her sister Mary had gone out of the room a little while before, and Lillie was wondering why she did not return, when there came a tremendous ringing at the bell.

"She's coming!" whispered Lillie to herself, and her heart beat fast as the door opened; and there marched gravely in—not a young lady—but a little old gentleman, whose hair was perfectly white, though he seemed to have a great deal of it, for his head was about the size of a half peck

measure. He wore a very long-tailed coat, buttoned up very tight; his pantaloons only reached down to his knees; but to make up for that his stockings came up to meet them, and were fastened with perfectly beautiful garters, with a big silver buckle shining in the very middle; shoes, also flourishing large silver buckles, adorned his feet. So you see he was quite an old dandy.

Leaning on his arm was a little old lady. Her hair was also as white as snow; and she too had so much, and it was so fuzzy, that it looked for all the world like a pound of cotton batting. She was dressed in the most gorgeous array, perfectly elegant to behold! white satin, and flowers, and furbelows; and was so very dignified and stiff in her manners that Lillie thought she must have fallen into a kettle of starch.

Another tremendous ring at the bell!

and the servant who answered it came into the parlor and said the little old gentleman and lady were wanted out in the hall immediately.

They made each a low bow and marched out of the room, while the children's bright eyes grew larger and larger, and they asked each other, with a little hop and skip apiece, what in the world was coming next.

As to Lillie, the lovely pink roses deepened on her cheeks; her eyes shone like diamonds, and two dimples kept playing hide and seek with the smiles that were chasing them every instant.

It was a breathless moment! All were waiting—their eyes fastened on the door. The knob turned—it slowly opened—and in marched the little old lady and gentleman, holding between them by the hands, the most perfectly beautiful young

lady that was ever seen in the whole world!!

She had on a white tarleton dress, with two skirts trimmed with cherry-colored blond lace. The waist was gathered in at the belt, and finished round the neck with a beautiful lace berthe. She wore a sash of cherry-colored satin ribbon, and in her belt was an elegant chatelaine, from which hung a tiny gold watch exactly the size of a five cent piece. A necklace was round her neck, and a wreath of flowers upon her head. She had fine open-worked stockings and morocco shoes. In her right hand was the cunningest little fan that ever was seen! and altogether she was quite the belle of the evening.

All the children drew a long breath! and gazed with admiration as the three strangers marched all round the room. Then they stopped in the very middle, and Lillie's mother, stepping up beside

them, gracefully waved her hand and said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, let me present to you Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and Miss Florence Grey."

The little old gentleman put his hand on his heart, and made such a low bow to the company that they saw the back of his bushy white head, and his long coat tails stuck out behind like a pennon in a high breeze; and the little old lady put her hand on *her* heart, and dropped such a low courtesy that the children thought she meant to sit down on the carpet; but Miss Florence looked straight before her, and never took the slightest notice of anybody.

Just then a queer little laugh was heard; a kind of a smothered, bursting laugh. The children stared! and there was the little old gentleman stuffing his pocket handkerchief into his mouth, and

perfectly shaking with laughter!! What conduct in an aged person!! But worse was coming! The little old lady began to laugh; then she screamed with laughter, and shook so that a most dreadful thing happened! She laughed all the hair off her head! It first tumbled over sideways, and then fell on the carpet all in a bunch!

"Sister Mary!! sister Mary!!" cried Lillie, running up to the little old lady, who, strange to tell! had another crop of beautiful golden brown hair under the other, smoothed down very close to her head.

"Why, it's a wig!" screamed the children, all laughing and running up. Was there ever anything so funny: "It's nothing but Miss Mary in a wig."

At this very moment Master Sam Russell stepped slyly behind the little old gentleman, and twitched at his bushy

white hair. It all came off in his hand amid roars of laughter; and underneath was the brown head of Harry, one of the greatest fellows for fun you ever saw, and a dear cousin of Lillie's.

But Miss Florence stared at it all with a simpering smile on her face; till Lillie, looking close at her, caught her up in her arms, and hugging her to her breast screamed joyfully out—"It's a new doll! a new doll!! Miss Florence is a new doll!!" and began running round the whole length of the two rooms, all the children scampering after her, laughing and shouting, till they threw themselves down on the sofas and chairs, perfectly breathless.

Yes, Miss Florence was a splendid wax doll; and the children gathered round Lillie, after just one second of rest, for they could not possibly be expected to sit still longer than that; and admired

and kissed the stranger; and "Oh, what a darling! what lovely eyes! what pretty boots! how big she is! and so on," was heard on all sides.

A tremendous ring at the bell! Why! were wonders never to cease? In came Margery saying there was a trunk in the hall left by the expressman, who said Miss Florence Grey must pay him twenty-five cents, and he would not stir a step till she did.

Here was a difficulty! Lillie's money never had a chance to burn a hole in *her* pocket, because she spent it the very moment her mamma or papa gave her any; and she did not know where twenty-five cents were to come from.

"Suppose you feel in Miss Florence's pocket," said her mother.

"Ah! let's see! cried Lillie; so she poked two of her little fingers in the pocket, and sure enugh! there was a

bright, new quarter of a dollar. She rushed out and gave it to the expressman, who hardly waited to say, "thank you," but was on his wagon with a bound, and round the corner like a flash of lightning.

Well, there in the hall was a beautiful new trunk! two of the boys brought it in very politely. But it was locked. What was to be done now?

"Feel in Miss Florence's pocket," advised the good mother again.

Lillie poked in two little fingers as before, and said that way down in the bottom there was certainly something. She caught it at last, and when it was fished out, it proved to be a small key.

All the children crowded round as the trunk was unlocked; and then you would have given a hundred dollars, only to see their faces, and hear them clap their hands, and exclaim with delight as dress after dress, and petticoats all tucked up,

pantalettes with the most beautiful embroidery round the legs, and a round straw hat, and two French bonnets, and all sorts of things; and everything else besides, was taken out. Oh, it was almost too good to believe!

Down sat the darlings on the carpet, and spread all the articles out. The boys looking on very much pleased.

"Let's try all the dresses on," said one of the little girls.

No sooner said, than done! and before Miss Florence could say "Jack Robinson," off came the dress she was wearing.

Did you ever! To be trying on a lady's dress at a party!! Who ever heard of such a thing? I never did! But the best of it was, that Miss Florence did not seem to care a button; she smiled and simpered, and allowed herself to be tumbled over on her nose, and never squealed an atom when pins were run into her

back. But no doubt she came to the conclusion that it was the custom of the country. At any rate, she could not help loving Lillie; and for my part, I don't know who could.

In the middle of the dressing, supper was announced! which was joyful news, as all the romping and playing had made the children as hungry as hunters; and, at the sight of a great table perfectly loaded down with cakes, oranges, and mottoes, instead of gravely marching in, looking as solemn as owls—as grown people do—they skipped and danced with delight: and such a little, laughing, joyous party was worth all the grum old grown-up balls from now to never. I wish all the children would invite me to their parties; I think it is *such* fun! The sight of so many happy little faces takes nearly all the sad look out of my face, and quite all the sad thoughts out of my heart.

They all ate just as much as they wanted of the nice things, and the little boys pulled the snapping mottoes with the girls; and very politely gave the motto papers, all crammed full of "love and dove," and "bliss and kiss," to those they liked best.

Then they played games and danced, and were so perfecty happy, that when the servants came to take them home, they one and all declared that they would not go, as their mammas had said they might stay till ten o'clock; when, would you believe it? Lillie's mother said it was ten minutes after ten then!

Where in the world had all the time gone to, this evening? Just the very evening, of all others, when they wanted it to last three times longer than usual! It really was too bad; and was very unkind in the hands of the clock to scrabble over such delightful hours so fast. But

there was no help for it now; and they put on their coats, cloaks, caps, and hats, and, after kissing Lillie and Miss Florence, who was going to live there, they all went home.

And that was the end of Miss Florence's party. I mean the party that was given in her honor. If you should like to see her, just come to me, and I will whisper in your ear were she lives now; for they have moved away from Clinton Place. She and Lillie have become great friends, and have never been separated since that celebrated evening, at the party, when the children tried on all her dresses.

Oh! I forgot one thing. The white wigs, you know. Well, the boys picked them up to examine them; and, what do you think the queer old things were made of? Why, nothing but a sheet of white wadding.

How they did laugh! and how sur-

prised they were! for they looked so respectable! just like the bushy horse hair wigs you see hanging in Mr. Isabeau the hair dresser's windows; and I, for one, the very next time I go to a fancy party, mean to make a wig of white wadding, for three cents, for that was all Henry's and Mary's cost.

Won't Lillie be surprised when she sees this story in print! I'm quite certain she will laugh and kiss me, and say, Why, Aunt Fanny! *You* were not at the party; how *did* you hear? Then I shall look very mischievous and say, "Ah! that's telling!"

But there's one thing I must tell, though I am very nearly certain you have guessed it already. Miss Florence was the very doll Lillie's mother had bought in the summer time, and Helen, the kind sister, had made every one of the beautiful things in the little trunk. To show you

Portrait of Miss Florence.

how handsome they all were, I have had Miss Florence's portrait taken in an every-day dress, and begged the printer to put it in this book. Don't it make a flourish? And was not Helen a perfect darling of a sister? Don't you wish she was yours? I do.

"There! what do you think of that story?" said the little mother, as she rolled up the manuscript.

"Oh, it is the best of all! They are all the best stories!" cried the children. "How we wish we knew Lillie and her beautiful doll!"

They gathered round their mother, and admired her picture, which Aunt Fanny had sent with the MS.; and counted the flounces, and thought her feet were "such darlings!" and then exclaimed again, "Oh, I wish we knew her!"

"Wouldn't you rather know Harry,

the little old gentleman in the wig?" asked a voice at the door.

The children turned quickly round, and saw Aunt Fanny standing at the door laughing at them.

They fell upon her with screams of delight, and, without meaning to, immediately upset her upon the carpet; for she is a little woman, with not a grain of bodily strength; all her strength is in her heart. So there she sat, so weak from laughing, that she could not help herself; while the children cried, "Oh, Aunt Fanny, we beg your pardon! did we hurt you? we only meant to love you."

Then they all got hold of her, and began to pull her up different ways; in consequence of which, down she came again, and half a dozen of the children with her.

"Oh!" she cried, "if you don't stop, you will push me through the carpet and floor, and make me fall plump on top of

the cook's head in the kitchen. Come, let's all sit here, while I tell you something, and recover my breath."

This invitation suited them exactly. Down they all dropped, with Aunt Fanny in the middle. The little ones tumbled over themselves, and lighted on their heads at first; but after a good deal of laughing and nestling up close together, they were tolerably quiet.

"Well," said Aunt Fanny, "I always knew you were perfect monkeys for cutting capers; but I did not know till now, that you were also a family of crabs."

"Crabs!" cried the children laughing.

"Yes, pulling me up, and trying to make me walk two ways at once, like a crab: very good fun for a crab, but it brought me flat, as you see, and has nearly frightened out of my head a fine story I have heard, about the consequences of an odd speech your friend Harry, the little old gentle-

man in the story of Lillie, made to a poor little boy."

"Oh dear, do tell it!" they cried; "try to get it back in your head again; we want to hear it so much."

"Well, will you get up and sit in chairs, and work like beavers at your mittens, if I do?"

"Oh, yes! yes!" They sprang up, and in a surprisingly short time the crochet needles were glancing in the gas light; while the mittens grew wonderfully.

It was a new pleasure to hear a story directly from her lips, especially as she had brought two or three pictures to illustrate it, which added greatly to their enjoyment.

It was rather late to begin one, but the little mother for once consented to let the small ones of the family sit up; and Aunt Fanny began the wonderful story of

THE FAIRY BENEVOLENCE.

THE FAIRY BENEVOLENCE.

THERE never was a more loving son than little Mark. He was only seven years old. Yet already he was of great use to his mother, who was a very poor widow, as poor as could be, and she had to work, without ever resting, from morning till night, to get food and clothes for herself and her dear child.

Oh, that terrible stitch, stitch, stitching! It must never stop; for all she got for making a whole shirt was ten cents, and with her utmost efforts she could only finish two in a day.

At last, what with crying and sitting up half the nights in the cold to finish her sewing, the poor widow fell very ill. What

was to be done? There was no money to pay a physician, the rent was coming due, and little Mark was almost crazy with grief. He sat by his mother's bedside and bathed her head, and did all he knew how to do.

They lived in a small hut, far away from the village, to which the poor widow had to take her work every week, from which it was conveyed to the great city of New York. There the shirts were sold for so much money, that the man who got them made for the shamefully small price of ten cents, rode in his carriage and lived in splendor. Ah! how I wish this wicked man, who was starving many a poor woman in the same way, could have been made to feel cold, and hunger, and thirst, till he nearly died. I think, after that he would begin to have a conscience—don't you?

One afternoon, while his mother was

Chicken #

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"Why, what is the matter, little fellow?"

in a troubled slumber, little Mark went and sat down outside the cottage. A kind farmer had been felling trees, and one of these he had given to Mark's mother, promising to send one of the farm lads that evening to saw and split it for her. Mark sat down on the log and leaned sadly upon his hand, and every little while he wiped away a tear that rolled down his cheek.

Presently a tall, handsome boy walked past. It was Harry, the one who personated the little old gentleman in the true story of "The Party Lillie gave to Miss Florence." His father had a country seat in the neighborhood, and Harry often took long walks in search of adventures.

"Why, what is the matter, little fellow?" he asked.

Mark raised his tearful eyes, and seeing a kind face, told his pitiful story.

"Oh, don't be down-hearted," cried

Harry. "Why, don't you know the fairies are not all dead yet? Now, there's the fairy Benevolence; just you ask her, good and loud, to help you, and see if she won't do it;" and he patted the little boy encouragingly on the head, slipped a quarter of a dollar—all the money he had with him—in his hand, and walked quickly away.

Harry's father was a skilful physician, with one of the largest and most loving hearts I ever knew; and when Harry told Mark to call upon the fairy for assistance, his idea was that the fairy this time would come in the shape of a rather stout gentleman, with the pleasantest smile and finest set of snow-white teeth that ever were seen. He had a kind, delicate way of doing a service, which made it better to take, and did more good than all the medicine in Mr. Hegeman's apothecary shop.

Very soon little Mark got up and went into the cottage. His mother was still

sleeping. It was now sunset, and the shadows began to deepen and darken in the room. Mark sat down by the bedside, and commenced thinking of what Harry had told him. He was a little bit of a fellow, you know, and of course would believe what such a great boy would say. So he concluded it must be true that the fairies were still to be found; and at last his longing grew so intense that he cried aloud, "Oh, Fairy Benevolence! come quickly, and make my poor mother well."

A sweet strain of music seemed to float in the air; the poor, whitewashed wall of the cottage opened in the middle, through which a beautiful lady entered, with a wreath of flowers round her head, and a wand of ivory in her hand.

"Well, my little friend," said she in a soft voice, "what do you want of me?"

Mark was almost speechless with as-

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"Listen to me, Mark; the fairy Benevolence cannot help you here. This mountain is beyond her dominions. But you have saved my life, and I am not ungrateful: get on my back, and I promise you, on the faith of an honorable rooster, I will carry you to the other side of the river."

Little Mark was overjoyed to hear this. He gave a spring, and was in a moment astride of his comical steed, holding on by two feathers. The rooster carried him as smoothly and easily as a steamboat; but not quite so fast, for it took twenty-one days' paddling to accomplish the journey; but at last he was landed high and dry on the opposite bank of the river.

Mark now travelled for a long time, but the mountain seemed to recede; and when at last he arrived at its foot, and began to climb, he thought it was growing up in the air, like Jack's beanstalk. He journeyed twenty-one days up and up,

but did not get the least bit discouraged: his great love for his mother gave him both patience and perseverance. "If I have to walk for twenty-one years," he said aloud, "I will never stop till I get to the top."

"Twenty-one years," echoed a malicious, sneering voice. "You are a very conceited little chap! Pray, what do you want?" and out came, from a cave in the mountain, a little man with one eye in the middle of his face, and two noses side by side.

"I wish to find the plant of life, sir," answered Mark, with a bow.

"Oh, you do! Pray, whom for?"

"For my dear mother, who is lying very ill at home."

"Oh, well you look like a tolerably good boy, and I believe I will permit you to go, under certain conditions. I am a *génie*; so, you see, I could cook and eat

you, if I liked. You must reap all my wheat, thrash out the grains, grind them into flour, and knead the flour into loaves, and bake them. You will find all the tools you want in the cave. When all is done, you can call me; but till you have finished, you shall not stir a step." So saying, he disappeared in a streak of blue smoke.

Mark had listened in terror, and, when the *génie* was out of sight, he looked all round him. On every side were immense fields of wheat. He raised his arms, then dropped them in despair, and, covering his face with his hands, cried out, "Oh, fairy Benevolence, come and help me!"

"Go to work, Mark," said a soft voice close to his ear.

Mark, upon this, took up a scythe and began to cut the wheat. This took five times twenty-one days; four times twenty-one days were spent in thrashing the

grain; three times twenty-one days in grinding it into flour; and twice twenty-one days in making it into loaves, and baking them.

As fast as the loaves were taken out of the oven, they arranged themselves in even rows, like books on the shelves.

When all was done, Mark called the *génie*, saying, "Here they are, sir, smoking hot."

The little man appeared immediately, and counted them—five hundred thousand loaves. He tasted a bit from the first and last loaf, smacked his lips, and said they were "prime." Then he took a snuff box from his pocket, and said to Mark, "Here, take this, and when you return home, you will find it filled with a new kind of snuff."

Mark thanked the *génie*, who immediately disappeared in a streak of brown smoke.

He went on climbing the mountain, but had not got far, when he came suddenly upon a giant sitting at the mouth of a cave. He seemed a jolly, good-natured old fellow, with a pipe, and a bundle of cigars, and a bag of money on a sort of table before him.

Mark was not very much afraid of him, and, making a low bow, said, "Please, sir, tell me if I am near the place where the plant of life grows."

"It is not very far off, youngster; but you don't stir a step farther, until you gather all my grapes, and make wine of them. So be in a hurry."

Poor little Mark! He looked round and saw grape vines, with the fruit weighing them down in every direction. It took three times twenty-one days to gather them, and twice the same time to make the wine and put it into casks.

When all was done, he called out, "It's all done, Mr. Giant."

The giant tasted the wine, from the first and last cask, smacked his lips, and said, "That's what I call good! Here, monkey, take this thistle; when you reach home you will find in it everything you wish." In an instant, giant, casks, and all had disappeared.

But little Mark, holding fast to his thistle, journeyed on. Soon he came to a wide ravine. It was impossible to jump across, and so deep that the bottom could not be seen. He walked along the edge for a long time, but it grew wider and more precipitous. "Oh!" cried Mark in despair, "no sooner do I overcome one obstacle, than another rises in its place. How shall I ever get past this dreadful ravine? He covered his face with his hands, and murmured, "Oh, fairy Benevolence, must my mother die!"

Hardly was the last word spoken, when a wolf appeared, and asked in a rough voice what he wanted in his domains.

"Oh, Mr. Wolf," said Mark trembling, "I seek the plant of life for my mother."

"Well," growled the wolf, "you must first kill all the game in my forests, and make them into game pies. Here are a bow and arrows, and here is a fire in this hole; not a step shall you stir till you have finished."

Mark took the bow and arrows, and tried to shoot the birds, but he could not hit a single one. Just then the crow appeared, and, with a polite "caw, caw," said, "You have saved my life: now I will show you my gratitude." So saying, she killed all the game for him. It took four times twenty-one days, and he killed five hundred thousand, of all sorts and sizes, woodcocks, partridges, quails, chip birds,

robins, and cat birds, for a wolf likes all varieties. As fast as the crow killed, Mark cooked, and when it was all done, he called out, "Mr. Wolf, here are your pies with plenty of pepper and salt."

The wolf tasted the first and last, smacked his lips, and exclaimed, "My! how nice!" He then gave Mark a stick, saying, "When you have found the plant of life, and want to go home, get astride of this stick; but now get on my back."

Mark obeyed, somewhat frightened, and holding fast to his steed's ears; the wolf went to the edge of the ravine, gave a prodigious jump; and, lo and behold! Mark was safely over.

And now, at last, the high wall of the garden appeared, in which grew the plant of life. In the distance was a tall tower, from the window of which a pretty little girl was watching him.

Mark uttered a thankful exclamation,

but alas! before he could get inside the garden, there was a deep moat to cross. He walked along the edge, hoping to come to a bridge; but found none. Still the brave, determined boy was not in the least discouraged, but said aloud, "I won't stir from this place until I find some way of getting across."

Hardly had he uttered these words before he saw an enormous cat, who, giving a loud "mew," by way of clearing her voice, asked him what he wanted there.

Mark repeated his story, and the cat, with another mew, said, "You cannot go across without you catch all the fish in the moat, and fry them with parsley and catsup. You will find a fishing rod and bait on the sand. Come! begin! while I set the table."

"Oh!" said little Mark, "how can I catch all these fish! Oh, fairy Benevolence! come to me."

to catch all the fish, and twice twenty-one days to cook them. Then Mark called the cat, saying, "Come, Mrs. Cat, come and look at your dinner." Down came the cat, with the table cloth still on her shoulders, tasted the first and last fish, smacked her lips, flourished her whiskers and tail, and cried, "Catipal! How many kinds you have caught! I must make a catalogue of them;" and then, to Mark's great amazement, she took the carving knife and cut off one of her paws, and handed it to him, saying, "Take this cat's paw: when you feel ill, weary, or are growing old, touch this paw to the end of your nose with the claws spread out, and all illness and weariness will disappear over your left shoulder."

Mark took it, and thanked the cat heartily. He thought he would try it then, and sure enough, he felt the fatigue walking over his left shoulder, just as he

had been told. The little girl stood looking on with an amiable expression, and then the cat said, "Get on my tail."

Mark did not like to step on the cat's tail. He knew by experience that a cat is apt to claw anybody well who ventures on such a caper; but the little Goody laughed out, and stepping on it herself, invited Mark to her side.

Thus encouraged, the boy got on; and then the tail began to grow, till the top of it reached the garden gate, to which it fastened itelf; and Mark and his pretty companion walked merrily over this new-fashioned bridge.

At the entrance, Goody took an affectionate leave of him, first pointing to a little clump of bushes with emerald green leaves, saying, "Never mind asking my father, the doctor. There is the plant of life, Mark; pluck it quickly, and off for home and your mother."

Oh, what joy he felt! He gathered several sprigs of the precious talisman, mounted the stick which the wolf had given him, and presto! in an instant was at the door of his mother's cottage.

Quickly he entered, and running up to her, pressed the plant to her lips. She brightened up immediately, hugged him to her heart, and exclaimed, "Oh, how rejoiced I am to have you again! You have been gone two years, seven months, and twenty-one days! How you have grown, and how rejoiced I am, my darling! my own boy!"

At this moment, the wall of the room opened, and the beautiful fairy Benevolence entered. She related to the happy mother all Mark's adventures, and the courage, patience, and goodness which he had shown. Then she told the brave boy that he might make use of the presents

given to him by the little old man and the giant.

Mark opened the snuff box, and out sprang a number of workmen about the size of bees, who set to work with such good will and diligence, that in an hour they had built a pretty little house, and furnished it completely, not forgetting a book case filled with excellent books, some fine engravings, and a few paintings on the walls. Mark was especially delighted at this, for he wanted of all things to learn to read and write; and the pictures charmed him even more, for he had a natural taste for such things.

Then he opened the thistle. Dear me! It was crammed full of clothes for himself and his mother, with sheets, tablecloths, and napkins, all of fine linen. Was there ever anything known like it!

While they were admiring these wonders, the busy-bee-men, who had popped

out of the snuff box, had prepared an excellent dinner of roast beef and pumpkin pie; and while Mark and his mother were eating it, what should march past the pretty bay window, which opened to the floor, but two fine cows, one fine horse, a great rooster, and twenty hens; turkeys, geese, and ducks; all lowing and neighing, and crowing, and cackling, and gobbling, and hissing, and quacking, enough to take your head off; but Mark and his mother and the fairy seemed to like it, for they clapped their hands and laughed so loud that—

"Why, Mark!" cried a cheery, laughing voice, "do you mean to sleep a week?"

Mark started up wildly and looked about him. What did it mean? He was in his own little bed, in his own little room!

"Where is the fairy Benevolence?" he said, looking perfectly bewildered.

Harry shouted with laughter. "Why, Mark, are you cracked? What has made you sleep so soundly? Father and I came here last evening, about an hour after dark, and found you fast asleep, sitting at your mother's bedside.

"'Poor, tired little chap, he has watched with his mother, till he is worn out,' said father; and he took you gently in his arms and laid you down here. Then he sat by your mother's bedside some time, to watch the effect of some famous medicine he gave her; and when she was in a pleasant sleep, he and I went home.

"But we came here this morning early, and found your mother much better, and you, you little monkey, still as sound as a top.

"I've been making your mother's room more comfortable; and Betty, mamma's

maid, has brought a great basket full of all sorts of nice things for her. Come and see her; she looks real bright! she is getting well already."

Little Mark had listened, with his senses getting clearer every minute, and at last he understood, with a sigh of disappointment, that his wonderful adventures and the fairy Benevolence *were only a dream.* He was almost crying as he said, "Oh, Mr. Harry, if you knew what I had been dreaming, you would be sorry for me. I was so sure it was all true about the fairy Benevolence."

"So it is," laughed Harry; "only the fairy has got whiskers. Come along."

Mark suffered Harry to lead him into the other room; and then, forgetting everything and everybody, he rushed up to his mother, and bursting into tears on her neck, sobbed out, "Oh, mother! if it only could have been true, you would have been

cured, and we should have been living in such a nice house! with cows, and hens, and turkeys, and all—oh! oh—!"

His mother was sitting up in the bed, and Harry's father was mixing a pleasant drink for her. Mark looked up as Harry said: "Come, Mark, don't cry so: here is a fairy who will help you, and your mother too." When the little boy saw the genial, kindly smile of the doctor, he felt comforted; and sitting down on the side of the bed, he told his wonderful dream.

It was listened to with the deepest interest; and when he had finished, the doctor patted him on the head, and said, "Never mind, my fine little fellow! if we can't give you a grand house and a snuff box full of servants, and a thistle which drops out of it all the clothes you want, I think we can cure your mother; and when she is well, we will find her something bet-

ter to do than making shirts at ten cents apiece; and you shall go to school, and learn to be a great scholar; and I don't see the first thing to prevent your having a good chance to become, one of these days, the President of the United States. So hurrah!"

The kind doctor was as good as his word. The poor widow recovered rapidly under his excellent care, which did her *heart* more good than her body, for it was both sweet and strange to receive so much kindness. Good Samaritans are very scarce nowadays.

When she was well enough to go out, she found that her rent was paid, a load of wood was piled away in the wood shed, half a barrel of flour was in the pantry, and some nice hams were hanging up. Plenty of work at good prices soon poured in. Little Mark was sent to the district school, for now he had comfortable clothes

and shoes on his poor little feet; and really, as he told his mother one happy evening—"After all, dear mother, I like my *waking* fairy Benevolence best—whiskers and all!"

A few evenings after the last story had been read, the little mother drew from her pocket quite a thick roll of paper, saying: "Here is something from Aunt Fanny, with a proposal that will surprise you."

"What *can* it be?" cried the children with eagerness.

"She wants you to act a play."

"*We* act a play! Who ever heard of such a thing?"

"Yes; she has partly written, partly translated a little play, and here is her letter with it."

"My Darling Children:

"Don't you wish you could get on faster than ever with your mittens? Well, here is a plan that came into my head a few days ago, and I have been arranging it very industriously.

"You must go right to work to learn the parts in this little play. I do not approve of some parts of it, because a deceit was practised to bring one of the boys to a sense of his selfish and undutiful conduct. This was 'doing evil that good may come,' and was very wrong. If your mother were to punish you by deceiving you, you would doubt her ever after; and for a child to doubt a parent is, I should think, one of the most miserable feelings in the world.

"With this very important exception, the little play is prĕtty good. And this is what your mother and I will do: When you are perfect in your parts, we will have

a private rehearsal. Then we will invite about fifty of our friends to witness this elegant entertainment, for which they must pay *one pair of mittens apiece* for the brave soldiers. We will give them one week to make them, which will be abundance of time; and I have no doubt but what they will think it very cheap pay for so much pleasure."

A long pause took place when the letter was finished; the children were so astonished, as well as delighted, at the new work prepared for them.

"Well!" cried Harry at last, "what *would* George say, if he knew the monkeys and crabs would turn actors next?"

"He would think it splendid," answered Anna. "You know the poor soldiers, who were made prisoners at that dreadful Bull Run battle, acted plays in their prisons, to keep themselves from dying of home-sickness."

"I want to act," said Willie.

"I want to act," echoed Bennie.

"Well," said the Little Mother, "let us see how many characters there are."

They all crowded round while she unrolled the paper. "Here is the mother, Mrs. Langdon. You must take that, Anna; and Harry will be Edward, your son."

"If he is the bad boy," said Anna, laughing, "I'll give him a thrashing every morning before breakfast."

"That will give you an excellent appetite," returned Harry; "for I shall run away, and you will have to catch me, first."

"Clara must be Mary Brown, Edward's nurse."

"Oh, dear little fellow," said Clara, patting Harry, "old nursey will buy you a stick of candy."

"Ago-o-o," said Harry, like a little baby, which set them all laughing.

"Johnny shall be Mr. Sherwood, the tutor, because he is naturally such a sober little fellow," said the mother; and we will invite Gus Averill, Harry's friend, to be Morris, because he and Harry are of the same age and height, and that will be excellent. Minnie can do Jane, the maid, very nicely; and Willie and Bennie can be Patrick and Andrew, the waiter and gardener."

So it was all settled; and the next morning the children began to study their parts—the larger ones assisting the little ones—so that they learned as quickly as the best. In the evening they repeated what they knew to their mother, working at the same time on their mittens, and were just as busy and happy as good and industrious children always are.

It was really surprising how soon they became perfect, and the rehearsal went off with complete success. Harry and Anna

kept their faces very well; and only Bennie and Willie grinned a little when they first came on the stage, which was the back parlor.

The company were to sit in the front parlor, and some curtains were hung up between that and the back room, and made to draw quickly aside, and drop just as quickly.

The invitations had been sent out, and were every one accepted. This is one of them:

"An Entertainment for the Benefit
OF THE SOLDIERS:
AT THE LITTLE MOTHER'S HOUSE,
Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 1861.
ADMISSION, ONE PAIR OF MITTENS."

The great evening came; and the children, ready dressed for their parts, were in a tremendous flutter. Even the little wee ones were to do something. They

were stationed at the parlor door with baskets, and charged not to let a soul come in, unless the pair of mittens were paid into one of the baskets. I warrant you they took very good care of that, for their eyes were as sharp as needles; and the moment the door was opened they would all cry "Mitten money! mitten money! pay your mitten money!" which made the company laugh so they could hardly get the "mitten money" out of their pockets.

After they had all arrived, and were comfortably seated, each with a beautifully written play bill, with the names of the actors upon it, the entertainment began.

MASTER EDWARD'S TRIAL;

OR, DO AS YOU WOULD BE DONE BY.

A LITTLE PLAY.

CHARACTERS.

Mrs. Langdon. By Anna.
Edward, her son, thirteen years of age. By Harry.
Mary Brown, his nurse. By Clara.
Morris, Mary's son, of the same age as Edward. By Master Augustus Averill, a friend of Harry's.
Mr. Sherwood, Edward's tutor. By Johnnie.
Jane, his mother's maid. By Minnie.
Patrick, the waiter. By Willie.
Andrew, the gardener. By Bennie.

Scene—*A fine House in the Country. A Parlor opening into the Garden.*

SCENE I.—MRS. LANGDON *and* MR. SHERWOOD.

MR. SHERWOOD. No, madam; I have come to bid you adieu. It is impossible. I cannot, I will not stay here another day.

MRS. LANGDON. But, Mr. Sherwood, listen a moment!

MR. S. No! I have made up my mind! I am tired of losing my time and pains with Edward!

MRS. L. Please have a little patience. Try him once more.

MR. S. He has already abused my patience beyond all bounds. He is wilful, ungrateful, idle, and stupid; and all the

blame will fall on me, whom you have employed to educate him.

MRS. L. Can you believe that I would blame you, who have been so kind to my son? Remember, that when my husband died, you promised me to devote yourself to my fatherless boy. Will you leave your work undone? He has talents, a good heart—

MR. S. No, madam; you deceive yourself. His heart is bad; his character unamiable; he is proud, vain, selfish, wicked.

MRS. L. What! wicked!

MR. S. Yes, madam. Does he not treat your servants as if they were slaves? Does not everybody hate him?

MRS. L. Oh, how severe you are! My dear son is young: he has pride, to be sure; and that very pride once caused you to say that you would make a great and good man of him.

MR. S. Yes, I said so; and perhaps I might have succeeded without you—

MRS. L. Without me! Why, what can you mean?

MR. S. Do you wish me to be frank with you?

MRS. L. Certainly. I shall feel obliged to you.

MR. S. Well; it is you who spoil the effect of all my lessons. It is you who spoil Edward. Excuse me, but I must say it.

MRS. L. I, Mr. Sherwood! I confess I love him above all other earthly possessions; but that is surely excusable. He is the image of a husband taken away from me in the first year of our marriage. You remember my grief was so excessive that I could not nourish my poor child; and by the advice and entreaties of my relatives and physician, I consented that he should be taken into the country by my

humble, faithful friend, Mary Brown, who nursed him for eighteen months with her own child, while I was sent to the West Indies, and afterward to Europe, to recover my health. Edward is all I have.

MR. S. If you love him so much, send him to boarding school.

MRS. L. Impossible! I cannot part with him. But I will put him entirely under your control. Only stay, and you shall govern him just as you like.

SCENE II.—*Enter* PATRICK.

MRS. L. Patrick, where is my son?

PATRICK. I don't know, ma'am.

MRS. L. What? You don't know?

PATRICK. No, ma'am. After taking his lessons this morning, he made me dress him three times. Yes, ma'am, three times! and by way of paying me for my trouble, he hit me a blow on the side of my head,

The Gardener and Waiter knocked down the Hill by Edward.

and crying, "Take that, old bog-trotter"—he ran off laughing; and five minutes after that, when I was talking with Andrew on the edge of the hill at the back of the house, he came suddenly up behind and upset us both. My back is all but cracked.

[*Rubs his back.*

MR. S. You see how he treats your servants!

MRS. L. Well! but he did it laughing. It was only his fun, dear little fellow! Patrick, go find him, and bring him here.

PATRICK. And suppose, ma'am, he won't come?

MRS. L. Tell him his *mother* wants him.

SCENE III.—*Enter* ANDREW.

PATRICK (*going out, to Andrew*). Where am I to find him? Have you seen him?

ANDREW. Seen who?

PATRICK. Master Ned.

ANDREW. Yes, I have seen him; I see a great deal too much of him; he has just chased me out of the garden with a hay fork.

PATRICK. Is he there now?

ANDREW. Oh yes; he tied an old hen fast by the leg to the fence, and is shooting at her with his bow and arrows.

MRS. L. What a boy! how thoughtless! Patrick, go and get him.

[*He goes out.*

SCENE IV.—*Enter* JANE.

ANDREW (*twisting his hat about, and standing first on one leg, then on the other*). Mrs. Langdon—

MRS. L. Well, Andrew, what is it?

ANDREW. I am your gardener, ma'am; am I not?

MRS. L. Yes, Andrew.

ANDREW. I have always tried to give you satisfaction?

MRS. L. Certainly. You have been very faithful.

ANDREW. You have fed me well, paid me well, and, what is far better, you are good and kind to me, which I like more than money, because the one you owe me, and the other you give me of your own free will.

MRS. L. Well, Andrew—

ANDREW. Well, Mrs. Langdon, I am going to leave you against my own desire. You are an excellent mistress, and I don't want to leave you, but it must be—

MRS. L. Andrew, I am surprised! Why do you wish to leave me? Have you anything to complain of? Have I done you any injustice?

ANDREW. Oh no, ma'am! You are all kindness and goodness; neither proud,

scolding, nor brutal; *but everybody is not like you.*

MRS. L. Do the other servants impose upon you?

ANDREW. Oh dear, no, ma'am! they are good and honest.

MRS. L. What do you complain of, then?

ANDREW. Why, ma'am, since I have begun, I will go on. Every man who respects himself, takes a pride in his work. If he is a gardener, he likes to hear people say, "There is a capital garden! Those vegetable beds are very nicely kept!" Well, it makes me mad to see your money and my work all wasted and destroyed.

MRS. L. But how?

ANDREW. That's just it. I know how, and you don't.

MRS. L. Will you tell me?

ANDREW. Well, it's Master Ned.

MRS. L. Master Ned?

ANDREW. Yes, ma'am. He is a perfect little Satan; he keeps me running after him, till I am out of breath, and perfectly hoarse with talking.

MRS. L. Why! What has he done?

ANDREW. The same he does every day: ten ground moles, fifteen chickens, twenty pigs, would do less injury in a year than he does in one day. He upsets the planks, tears up the walks, breaks the windows of the hot beds, tramples on the flowers, breaks down the pear trees, plays the mischief in the vegetable garden, and runs off with my tools. I can't stop him; and when I say, "Master Ned, you must not hinder me so in my work; if you want to turn double somersets, go and do it in your dear mamma's parlor; go and plague Mr. Sherwood, or Patrick, or, still better, torment Jane, and leave me to plant my cabbages." Do you know how he answers? By cracking me over the shoul-

ders with his switch, and crying out, "Look out, old potato top, or I'll tumble you into the pond." I might as well ask the river to run up hill. And look here, ma'am, see this picture (*shows picture*) he drew of me, watering the garden in a thunder storm, as if I ever did such a thing! or looked like that, either!"

MR. S. In a short time, no one will be able to live with him.

MRS. L. Dear me! It is nothing but his high spirits and love of mischief! But I own you are not unreasonable, Andrew. I don't want my son to tease you, much less ill-treat you. I will forbid him, before you, from going in the garden.

ANDREW. Good! Only do that, and I will give him my finest flowers, and my best fruits, if he will only keep away.

MRS. L. (*sighing*). I seem to have made twenty excuses for my son in ten minutes; but you shall be satisfied.

The Caricature Edward drew of the Gardener.

JANE. Mrs. Langdon, I must also speak to you about Master Ned.

MRS. L. Well.

JANE. This morning he opened the cage door and let your canary fly away, and twisted poor Poll's neck because she said, "Bad boy!"

MRS. L. Oh! oh! my parrot's neck!

JANE. Yes, ma'am.

MR. S. Now, madam, this is not thoughtlessness: it is a case of actual badness.

JANE. Yes, and he does something as bad every day.

ANDREW. Why, he is worse than Lucifer!

JANE. Every morning, ma'am, he overturns your toilet table, spills the cologne water, upsets your work box, makes your finest letter paper into boats, and puts the kitten to sleep in the crown of your best bonnet; and then, when I beg

him to behave, he calls me an old cat, and a buzzard, and a red-headed crab.

MRS. L. Why have you not told me this before?

JANE. Why, ma'am, I have; but it has always ended by his being excused and I scolded.

MRS. L. Stay here. You shall see if I excuse him! He might change his clothes ten times, pull up a plant or two, pick a few flowers, or even trouble you at your work. I don't see anything so very dreadful in all that. But to twist my parrot's neck! Oh!—

SCENE V.—*Enter* PATRICK.

MRS. L. Well, Patrick—

PATRICK (*rubbing his legs and making wry faces*). He is coming, ma'am—

MRS. L. What's the matter?

PATRICK. Master Ned has been breaking a stick over my legs.

MRS. L. (*very angry*). The child's a demon! I am outrageous! I am furious!

MR. S. Control yourself, madam! do not fly so suddenly from extreme indulgence to severity; do not correct a child when you are in a passion.

MRS. L. You may be right, sir, but I shall punish him as he deserves.

ANDREW. Please don't beat him, ma'am. Here he comes.

SCENE VI.—*Enter* EDWARD, *who runs up to his mother, and is about to kiss her.*

EDWARD. Were you asking for me, mamma? dear, pretty mamma!

MRS. L. Stand back, sir! I don't kiss a bad boy!

EDWARD. A bad boy! Why, mamma, what have I done?

MRS. L. Do you dare to pretend that you do not know? Look at Andrew, Patrick, and Jane!

EDWARD. I see them. Have they been complaining of me?

MRS. L. Yes, and I am astonished at what they tell me.

EDWARD. The mean things! Mamma, they—

MRS. L. Take care, sir! Don't add lying to your other crimes.

EDWARD (*looking angry*). But what do they say I have done? You scamp of a turnip top, Andrew! is it you who are trying to rob me of my mother's love? Such a good boy as I am, too!

ANDREW. You a good boy! about as much as the old gray donkey is a robin redbreast. No! you are a nuisance, and ought to live up in the air in a balloon by yourself. You have ruined my garden; and whenever I beg you to stop, you answer me with your switch over my legs.

EDWARD. Oh, mamma, that is too cruel! I only wish to make you a bou-

quet, when Andrew comes up, yelling like a tiger, "Don't touch those violets! Let that pansy alone! Stop! you shan't take a rose!" Well, what can I do? So I dug up a little plot, pulling out a few vegetables, so as to raise some flowers for you myself. Then Andrew screams out, "What have you done? You have pulled out all my onions!" Then I take another place, and old Sourcrout bawls, "The beets are planted there." I declare it's too bad! I wish to cultivate the earth, because Mr. Sherwood says the most respectable men in the world are farmers; and Andrew, mad as fury, comes and drives me away. Suppose I do spoil some of his stupid cabbages; if I could present you with a flower raised by my own hand, it would be worth all his cabbage heads, and his own too.

MRS. L. The darling! How he loves me! Andrew, you are a brute!

ANDREW. Thank you, ma'am. That's what I call justice.

MRS. L. My dear son was only seeking to gratify me, and you did very wrong to hinder him. Dear child! he was willing to work like a farmer to please me.

ANDREW. I'm dumb! If you wish it, he may scratch up the whole garden, and empty it into the duck pond; he may break down fifty trees a day; he may have a mass meeting of the dogs, pigs, chickens, ducks, turkeys, and the old gray donkey, in the best flower beds; and end by inviting Farmer Green's bull Sampson to dance a hornpipe through the glass into the conservatory. Nothing now will astonish me.

MRS. L. That will do. My son, I forgive your capers in the garden, but I have a more serious charge against you. How can you excuse yourself for letting my

canary fly away? and above all, why did you twist my poor Poll's neck?

EDWARD. Well, mamma, you would have done the same. I did open the door of the canary's cage. He was poking his poor little bill through the bars, and I was so sorry for him! I thought he wanted to go to his mother, who, perhaps, might be perched up in the tree opposite, and so I gave him his liberty. Mr. Sherwood has often told me that kindness to animals is one of the finest virtues.

MRS. L. Oh! was twisting my parrot's neck another proof of your kindness? What had the poor bird done to you?

EDWARD. Nothing to me, mamma; but the wicked little squinting thing had bitten Jane's finger, when she was kindly giving him some sugar; and she cried, and seeing the tears rolling down her cheeks, I got very angry, quite in a rage. I am very sorry, but I did not think that

Jane would have been the one to accuse *me.*

MRS. L. There, Jane! you are an ungrateful creature! You have tried to poison my mind against my son!

JANE. But, Mrs. Langdon—

MRS. L. Be silent! Your affair is settled. But, Edward, when Patrick came to call you, why did you break a stick over his legs?

EDWARD. It was very wrong in me, mamma; but I had just gathered some splendid roses for you: they were on the ground, and the clumsy fellow trampled upon them without seeing them. It put me in such a passion, I did whack him once or twice. I beg his pardon, mamma.

MRS. L. He should ask yours, you dear boy! I order you all to apologize to my son, or I shall discharge you. You first, Jane. My son would not for twenty gardens, or poll parrots, do a mean thing

or tell a lie; he shall be respected and obeyed as I am; and those who don't like it can leave.

ANDREW (*ironically*). I beg your pardon, Master Edward, for the good switching you so kindly gave me; I beg your pardon for the damage you did to the garden; you will oblige me by continuing to tumble everything topsy-turvy, and break all the rest.

PATRICK. Forgive me, Master Edward, for all the pretty little capers you cut up.

EDWARD. Oh, certainly. Mamma, they are good sort of people, after all; and I hope you will excuse their coming to complain of me.

MRS. L. To oblige you, my dear son, I will. You see, all of you, how amiable he is. And now remember, the very first complaint he makes of *you*, I will discharge you. Leave the room.

ANDREW *to* PATRICK (*going out*).

Here's a pretty how-d'ye-do! He has made his mother believe that black is white.

Scene VII.

Mrs. L. You see, my son, though I do not wish the servants to be disrespectful to you, I require you to treat them with kindness. They are human beings like you.

Edward (*contemptuously*). Like *me!* I should think not.

Mr. S. Yes, sir! They are not rich, to be sure, or born of a high family, nor is it likely that their heads will ever burst with the knowledge a fine, thorough education gives; but they are capable of every good and noble quality of the heart. Do you understand?

Edward. Yes, Mr. Sherwood.

Mrs. L. Try to make everybody love you.

Edward. Dear mamma, I don't care for any love but yours.

MR. S. But you must care for the respect and friendship of others; which, as Addison says, "improves happiness and abates misery, by doubling our joys and dividing our griefs."

EDWARD (*sneeringly*). He talks like a book, don't he, mamma?

MRS. L. He does, indeed; and if you love me, you will profit by his advice and lessons. Perhaps you owe more to him than to me. Love him, and be grateful to him, for his constant endeavor to cultivate your virtues and talents.

EDWARD. Love him—I cannot promise that.

MRS. L. Why not, my son?

EDWARD. Because I have given all my love to my dear mamma (*kissing her*).

MRS. L. You darling! kiss me again! Ah, Mr. Sherwood! can you blame me if I almost adore him? [*Exit* MRS. L.

Scene VIII.

Mr. Sherwood. You are ungrateful, to vex and grieve a mother who loves you so dearly. If you loved her as much, you would obey her if she only held up her little finger; but it seems to me a cat-o'-nine-tails flourished before you might have a very good effect.

Edward. I am sorry that—

Mr. S. Did you take your writing lesson to-day?

Edward. No, sir. I don't like writing lessons. They are a perfect plague. They give me the cramp in my thumb, and kinks in my fingers.

Mr. S. Essence of switch on the fingers is good for taking out kinks. Has your dancing master been here?

Edward. Oh yes! I love him dearly, he is so funny! He tells me comical stories, and can imitate everybody in the

house. Andrew's lumbering, poking walk, Jane's prinking ways, and even you, with your long dismal face, your eyes staring at a book like a cat looking at a fish, and your solemn walk, oh, it would make you die a-laughing! His lessons always seem too short.

MR. S. What is that sticking out of your pocket?

EDWARD (*pulling it out and looking at it*). Oh! ha, ha! It's a portrait I drew of you, as you look when I don't know my lessons.

MR. S. Give it to me. (*He takes the caricature and looks at it, but shows no anger.*) So you prefer to spend your time in an unamiable, contemptible occupation like this, to acquiring useful lessons.

EDWARD (*looking a little ashamed*). Well, I like to be amused. It was only a little fun. It was not meant for you to see.

MR. S. Will you give me an account of your reading to-day?

EDWARD. I—I—have not been reading, sir.

MR. S. Not reading? Why?

EDWARD. Because the book you gave me had so many long, stupid words, that I couldn't understand what it was all about, so I just pitched it out of the window.

MR. S. You call a book stupid which has such a thrilling account of the bombardment of Vera Cruz, with a fine engraving showing you the great General Scott and his brave soldiers? I wonder at you! You have a head, and so has a drum; both empty.

Bombardment of Vera Cruz.

SCENE IX.—*Enter* MRS. LANGDON, MARY BROWN, *and* MORRIS, *her son.*

MRS. L. See, my son, I bring you one of your best friends—your dear old nurse Mary, and her son, who is almost your brother.

MARY (*running up to kiss him*). How do you do, dear, dear child! how handsome you are! Here's your old playfellow, Morris; don't you remember him?

EDWARD. No!

MORRIS (*who has a nice little cream cheese wrapped up in a napkin*). I remember *you.* You're my dear brother Edward. See—I have brought you this cream cheese; my mother made it on purpose for you—take it—don't you know me now?

EDWARD (*who recoils, and takes twenty-five cents out of his pocket*). Here, take this, Morris.

MORRIS (*coloring indignantly*). I did not ask you for money; I don't want it; I am not a beggar.

EDWARD. But I ought to pay you for the cheese.

MORRIS (*with emotion*). Do you think I brought it to you for money? I would rather have thrown it out of the window.

MRS. L. Never mind, Morris, take the cheese home to your father; it will do him good to eat it.

MORRIS (*taking it and giving it to his mother, and saying, in a disappointed tone*), Well, take it, mother.

MARY (*looking lovingly at Edward*). How handsome he is! how he has grown! My heart warms to him.

MRS. L. Well, Edward, your kind nurse must have some lunch—go and order some.

EDWARD (*scornfully*). Isn't Patrick here?

MARY. No, my son. I asked him to give my old pony some water.

MRS. L. Go, my son, go; it will gratify me.

EDWARD. Oh! then I will fly. What shall I order?

MRS. L. The very best in the house.

MORRIS (*running after him*). Wait, Edward, I will go with you, and help you give the order. I know what my mother likes.

SCENE X.

MRS. L. Well, dear nurse, how do you get on since you have moved into your new cottage?

MARY. Oh! capitally, ma'am.

MRS. L. And your husband, big Peter—is he pleased and contented?

MARY. He is so, ma'am, as happy as a king! Daisy—that's our cow, ma'am—has just given us a beautiful calf; we have

fifty chickens, twenty geese, and a good old pony who carries our vegetables to the railroad station for the New York market. I thank God, and you who have been so good to us.

MRS. L. Is big Peter industrious, and does he bring up Morris in the right way?

MARY. Oh! thank God again for all his mercies. I am not proud; but my boy is the best boy in the whole neighborhood, and so smart! he reads in the biggest books; he does the most terrible long sums, almost like a flash of lightning—his schoolmaster is astonished at his quickness; his head is just as full as it can hold of learning, and his heart is just as full of love for his father and mother. (*She falters, and the tears rush into her eyes*).

MRS. L. (*very kindly*). I am delighted to hear this; he will always be a comfort to you if he is so good now. But here he comes—he looks distressed.

SCENE XI.—MRS. LANGDON, MARY, MR. SHERWOOD, *and* MORRIS.

MORRIS (*crying and rubbing his eyes*). Oh, dear!

MARY. What's the matter, my son? Have you had a tumble?

MORRIS. No, mother; never mind.

MARY. But tell me, what has happened?

MORRIS (*trying to lead her away*). Come, mother, let us go away.

MRS. L. Where is Edward?

MORRIS. In the garden, ma'am. Come, mother, come; I want to go home. I don't like this place.

MRS. L. No doubt Edward is picking a basket of fruit for you.

MORRIS. I rather think not. Mother, I beg you to let us leave at once. I have my reasons.

MR. S. And I can guess them. Ed-

ward has been beating you—has he not?

MRS. L. Impossible!!!

MORRIS. Very possible, indeed. In fact, quite certain.

MRS. L. Dear me! did he hurt you much?

MORRIS. It is not the pain. I could have beaten him twice as hard if I wanted to. What hurts me most is what he said.

MRS. L. And, pray, what did he say?

MORRIS. Well, ma'am, when I wanted to hug old Beppo, he told me to take my paws from the dog's neck; that I was a country bumpkin, and a big clumsy booby, and no brother of his; and the sooner I skedaddled home the better he should be pleased.

MARY. Oh! the unnatural, wicked boy! You are right, my son; we will go home, where we are not despised. Good bye, Mrs. Langdon; Master Edward is your

son; but I no longer think of him as the child I fed at my breast, and loved nearly as my own. He has struck his brother! Come, my son, you are not his equal; therefore you cannot be his friend.

MRS. L. But listen one moment, Mary.

MARY. No, ma'am; we will not stay where we have been so humbled; we are plain country folks, but we have hearts and feelings, and your son has neither. God will never bless him. Such pride has no place in heaven.

MRS. L. You are right, Mary; but perhaps Morris offended him. You have not heard both sides.

MORRIS. Yes, I offended him. I put my arms round his neck to hug him, when he threw me off; and when I said that that was not the way to treat a brother, he struck me!—more than once, too!—and said those mean, cruel things.

MARY. Oh, the little villain!

MR. S. Are your eyes still blinded, Mrs. Langdon? Can you still find excuses? Will you praise his good heart when he dares to ill-treat and strike his nurse's son?

MRS. L. (*weeping*). No, I cannot excuse him; his ingratitude and wicked conduct have nearly broken my heart. What shall I do?

MR. S. I have just thought of a plan, madam. It is a desperate remedy; but I know of nothing else in the wide world that will cure him.

MRS. L. Tell me—what is it?

MR. S. (*aside*). Nurse, send away your son for a few moments; he must not know what I am about to say.

MARY. I understand, sir. Morris, go to the stable, and see if old Whitenose has eaten all he wants.

MORRIS (*jumping up with animation*). I am to put him to the wagon, am I not?

and then we are to go home. Oh, I am so very glad. [*Exit.*

Scene XII.

Mrs. L. We are alone now, Mr. Sherwood. Ah, if you knew how much I loved my son, and how unhappy I am!

Mary. I love him, too, in spite of his bad heart.

Mrs. L. Well, what are you going to propose? To have him beaten black and blue? I am ready for anything.

Mr. S. Don't be alarmed, madam. It is his heart that is to be put to the trial; reverses and adversity often soften the heart; when one has suffered, he knows better how to pity the deprivations and sufferings of others. Your son has never been contradicted; he may be unkind and cruel sometimes from thoughtlessness and ignorance. Now, let us put his heart to a severe trial. Let us pretend that he is

Mary's son, and Morris is really your son. Push the experiment so far as to send him to live with her, until he is thoroughly humbled, and his faults disappear.

MARY (*starting up*). Oh, no! no! Your trial may all be very fine, but I will not lend myself to it. No, sir. We are not rich, but we have always been honest, and I will not have anybody suppose for a moment that I could have committed such a dishonorable, such an unnatural act. Say that Morris is not my son? If I should join in such a trick, my husband would hate and despise me, and rightly too.

MR. S. But, nurse, you forget. It is only supposing.

MARY. Suppose as much as you please, sir; even the suspicion of such a plot would blacken my name forever. Oh! would any woman deny her own child?

MRS. L. Listen to me, Mary. I love

Edward as much as you do Morris. Do you think I would abandon my child or disgrace you? Far from despising you, I shall take care to let everybody know the sacrifice you are making for my son's sake; and every one will praise you for helping me, and believe that love for Edward has alone induced you to consent to this plan. If he should grow up to be a man with such selfish, cruel ways, it will break my heart. I should be in my grave before many years, killed by the misconduct of my only child. I have but one objection to what we are about to do. We shall practise a deception.

MARY (*weeping*). Oh, ma'am, and my son, my poor little Morris, he too must be deceived; he cannot be in the secret.

MRS. L. I will try to make him happy. I will treat him like my own child. Remember it is only for a week or two, perhaps only for a day or two.

MARY. Oh yes, ma'am, I know you will be kind; but suppose in that week, your fine house, your gay clothes, your grand dinners and suppers should turn his head, and ruin his loving heart for his parents. If he should return to us, despising our humble life,—oh! I can't bear it! My child would be worse than lost to me!

MRS. L. Fear nothing, Mary. Morris is an excellent boy, and not so easily spoiled. I promise you, that I will so arrange matters, that he shall be only too glad to come back to you, and be Morris again.

MARY (*coming to Mrs. L. and taking her hand*). Are you sure? will you solemnly promise this?

MRS. L. (*raising her hand*). I solemnly promise.

MARY (*still weeping*). Well, then, try your trick; but, oh! do not let it last too long.

MRS. L. (*rings the bell; the servant appears*). Call Master Edward and Morris here.

Enter EDWARD *and* MORRIS.

EDWARD. Dear mamma, do you want me?

MRS. L. I told you to order some luncheon for your nurse, and your brother.

EDWARD. Well, I thought when they were ready, they could go into the kitchen.

MRS. L. (*covering her face*). Oh! Edward—

EDWARD. What is the matter, dear mamma?

MRS. L. (*aside*). Oh! how shall I say it! (*Aloud.*) Do not give me that sweet title any more.

EDWARD. What? Mamma, what do you mean?

MRS. L. Edward, I am about to tell

you something that will pierce your heart; turn your dear face away from me. You —*you are not my child.*

EDWARD (*turning deadly pale*). Not your child?

MR. S. No, sir; and perhaps what seems to be so great a misfortune now coming upon you, may prove a blessing in disguise.

EDWARD (*clasping his hands convulsively together*). Not your child?

MR. S. Yes; through love and ambition for their own son, Mary and her husband were weak enough to change you for the son of Mr. Langdon; to change the name and dress of the two infants, was all that was necessary.

MRS L. And now, Mary, repenting of this, has made me a confession. Morris is my son and you are hers.

EDWARD. You are *not* my mother?

MRS. L. No, Edward; but take heart.

I shall still love you and take care of you. Come, Morris; come, my real son, do not cry; come to me.

MORRIS (*rushing into Mary's arms*). Oh, no! no! Mr. Edward has been your son for so long; keep him, keep him. I cannot leave my mother, I must go home with her (*bursting into tears*).

MARY. But, Morris, he is my son.

MORRIS. Oh no, dear mother, he will never love you as I do! do not drive me from you! do not turn your face away! kiss me, mother, and tell me you will take me away with you. Oh, I see! I must believe it (*wringing his hands with grief*).

MRS. L. Morris, you are ungrateful! Do you not see what a splendid change this is for you?

MORRIS. Please excuse me, ma'am; I honor and respect you; but my mother, who nursed me, and has taken care of

me all these years, I *love* her. Edward is much handsomer, and far more genteel than I. Oh! keep him and let me go with my mother!—(*clasps his hands and kneels, while large tears roll down his cheeks*).

MRS. L. I order you to come with me. I *will* have it!

MR. S. Remember, she is your mother.

MORRIS (*weeping bitterly*). Oh, how miserable I am! [*They go out.*

EDWARD (*who now thinks himself* MORRIS, *remains*).

MARY. Well, Morris; that's your name now, you know—what's the matter? are you sorry to have me for a mother? I shall have to sleep with one eye open, to keep you out of mischief; but if you are good and work hard, though I can't give you such fine clothes, I will love you as much as Mrs. Langdon did.

EDWARD (*his lips quivering*). Oh! she is no longer my mother!

MARY. Well, am I not as good? I don't live in such a fine house, crammed full of gimcracks; but I've got a dictionary that you can study in, and big Peter, your father, shall hang a great switch over the mantelpiece, to remind you that he won't stand any nonsense, or idleness, from you. Dear me! how glad he will be to see you! Come, run with a hop, skip, and jump, to the stable, and harness up old Whitenose: it's high time we were off.

EDWARD (*sighing*). Yes, mother.

MARY. But first bid Mr. Sherwood good-by, and the rest. Thank them all for their kindness to you; wait here a moment, till I come back. [*Exit.*

MR. S. Well, Edward, or Morris I should say, you see that nothing is sure in this world: and I cannot but think that this reverse will do you good. You treated every one except your mother—as

you supposed Mrs. Langdon was—with harshness, insult, and insolence: perhaps now you will learn, in the very strongest manner, the exact meaning and intention of the Golden Rule.

EDWARD. Oh, how unhappy I am! The very servants are more fortunate! They at least can live with Mrs. Langdon.

MR. S. You despised and insulted your own mother; you struck your brother; suppose he in return should—

EDWARD (*weeping*). Oh stop, I beg, Mr. Sherwood!

MR. S. You weep because you are only the son of Mary and big Peter, a poor country farmer.

EDWARD. Oh no, sir! if they are my father and mother, I will try to respect them, but to leave Mrs. Langdon—to be no longer her son—that is what is driving me to despair. Oh, I shall die! I shall die!

MR. S. Do not be so distressed. Mrs. Langdon will still be very kind to you. She will love you still.

EDWARD. If she will only think of me sometimes. Will you speak, sir, of me to her, after I am gone? Will you tell her that my greatest grief, is leaving her; that I shall never, never, never forget her? Will you do this, dear Mr. Sherwood?

MR. S. (*with agitation*). Yes, my dear boy, I will.

EDWARD. And will you forgive me for having profited so little by your lessons; and being so often disrespectful? Please forgive me, sir.

MR. S. Willingly, my child. This is a great change of fortune. An hour ago, you were rich and well born, now you are the son of a poor farmer. Try to do your part well in this altered sphere; be gentle and good, and God will not desert you. Good-by. [*Exit.*

Enter JANE, *with a coarse cap and jacket,* PATRICK *following.*

JANE (*ironically*). How do you do, Mr. Morris?

PATRICK. (*ditto*). Your humble servant, Mr. Morris.

JANE. Will Mr. Morris allow me to show him his new dress?

PATRICK. Will Mr. Morris give me leave to help him on with his jacket?

JANE. Dear me! it fits him to a hair! and the cap too! My! I'm a thinking you won't be so proud after this; you can't treat *me* any more as a servant.

PATRICK. Nor me! You won't beat a double tattoo about my shins again in a hurry!

JANE. I shan't be snubbed all day long, and told that my nose is as red as my hair, and my eyes as green as my understanding. What a comfort!

PATRICK (*cutting a caper in the air, and singing*). Hi fol-de-rol! how happy we shall all be! tide-o riddle rol-de-da!

JANE. What are you crying for, Master Morris?

EDWARD. Oh, how you treat me!

JANE. Why! Is not that the way to read the proverb? "As you have done to others, they shall do to you."

PATRICK. You don't seem to see it. We are only giving tit for tat.

EDWARD. You are right, I deserve it all! Jane, Patrick, forgive me! I beg your pardon.

JANE (*looking very sorry*). Poor child! poor little fellow!

PATRICK. After all, he has not a bad heart!

EDWARD. Please forget all the injuries I have done to you, and try not to hate me when I am gone. Will you, dear Jane? will you Patrick?

JANE (*bursting out crying*). Oh! oh! what a pity, what a pity!

PATRICK. It is dreadful!

JANE. He will have to plough and hoe in the ground!

PATRICK. And kill pigs, and drive the cow!

JANE. Why couldn't that stupid Mary hold her tongue after keeping the secret thirteen years, and settle down for life with that clumsy Edward. I hate the sight of him! I don't believe, but what it is all a trick she is trying to play off.

PATRICK. I'll bet my head, it is!

EDWARD. Don't insult my mother. She is poor, but honest. I cannot hear you accusing her.

Enter ANDREW *with a basket, shovel, and rake.*

ANDREW (*whistles*). Wheugh! Is it true then, that Master Edward is not Mrs. Langdon's son?

JANE. Yes, indeed! Just look at the poor boy; we are so sorry for him! and though he has teazed us a great deal, we feel for him with all our hearts.

ANDREW. Just so with me. He has put me in a rage no end of times, and when I was scolded before you all, this morning, I was as mad as a wasp with the toothache. But since I have heard of his great misfortune, I am sure, I would not bear him malice for the world; so I have come to make friends with him, before he goes away.

EDWARD. Dear Andrew! (*He weeps again.*)

ANDREW. Here! I have brought you a basket and some tools; they will be useful to you in your new situation; and here is my silver watch, it goes splendidly! but you must not wear it every day, you must save it for Sundays. I give it to you, that you may remember me, and

say, "My friend Andrew gave me this watch, because he loved me."

EDWARD. How kind you are to me, who have deserved it so little! Pray forgive me, and forget my bad conduct.

ANDREW. I forgive you with all my heart! and now that you are in trouble, I remember nothing. I will come to see you next Sunday evening, and bring you some nice little present. Keep up a stout heart, and a stiff upper lip; you are not used to work, and at first it will come very hard; ploughing is not quite so easy as playing cat's cradle, and backgammon in the parlor. You will have no dancing, unless a mad bull gallops after you, when, no doubt, you will practise double quick-step to perfection. All the gay pleasures you have now, will be lost to you; but there is one happiness, worth all the rest, which you can keep if you please; and *that is a clear conscience.* Serve God, love

your parents, and work faithfully, and you will be sure to possess this great blessing, and consequently be happy.

EDWARD. Thank you, Andrew, for such good advice; but will you all love me when I am gone?

ALL THREE AT ONCE. Yes, indeed! Always!

EDWARD. Will you then promise, sometimes to speak kindly of me to Mrs. Langdon?

ANDREW. We promise.

JANE (*crying bitterly*). Oh! oh! this is too much. I can't bear it. Good-by, dear Master Morris.

EDWARD. Won't you kiss me, Jane?

JANE. Oh, yes, with all my heart. (*Kisses him.*)

PATRICK. Please shake hands with me, Master Morris.

ANDREW. And me too.

EDWARD. Good-by, good-by; all my dear friends!

Enter the real MORRIS.

EDWARD (*who has turned away and don't see him*). And this is the dress I am always to wear. I am Morris, son of Mary and big Peter! Oh, I can bear that; but to leave Mrs. Langdon—to be no longer her son—to have no right to her love—oh! oh! I shall die!

MORRIS. Good morning, brother.

EDWARD (*without turning round*). Good morning, Master Edward.

MORRIS. You seem angry with me; but you are wrong. If I have injured you, it is not my fault. *I* did not do it of my own will; and yet I have come to beg your pardon.

EDWARD. It is not your fault.

MORRIS. But—don't you love me?

EDWARD. Why do you ask, sir?

MORRIS. I call you "*brother*," and you call me "*sir*."

EDWARD (*with effort*). Well, if you wish it, I will call you *brother*.

MORRIS. And love me like one?

EDWARD. Yes.

MORRIS. Well, now I'm going to try you. Here, do you see these things? I found them in your pockets. This gold watch, this pocket book full of money, this yellow pin, with a little ball in the middle of it which looks like glass—I really thought it was glass, and the pin copper, but they say it is a diamond set in gold, and worth more than all the rest. Then I asked Mrs. Langdon if she had given me all these grand things to do just as I pleased with. She said, "Certainly"—and I have come as fast as ever I could with them to you!—take them!

EDWARD. Thank you. I'd rather you kept them.

MORRIS. Do you refuse your brother?

EDWARD. What could I do with such finery—they do not suit my humble station?

MORRIS. But it is not for yourself that I give them.

EDWARD. I don't understand you.

MORRIS. They are for your poor mother; for your father who works so hard, and is so patient and good. To scrape together money enough to pay his rent troubles him dreadfully; and so the very first time the landlord comes, give him all these gimcracks, on condition that he leaves him alone for the rest of the year.

EDWARD. Yes, I will do this; give them to me.

MORRIS. Here they are. Will you promise me one thing more?

EDWARD. What is it?

MORRIS. It is that you will love your father and mother dearly.

EDWARD. Yes, Morris; I will try.

MORRIS. And tell them every day that I shall never forget them; and when I am a man, and you are too, you shall all come and live with me, and you and I will have everything together, just like two brothers—will you?

EDWARD. Yes, brother—(*Morris clasps him in his arms, and says*)—"Oh, how happy you have made me!"

Enter MRS. LANGDON, MR. SHERWOOD, *and* MARY.

MRS. L. Ah! that is a pleasant sight. I am delighted to see you such good friends. I wish you to love each other always.

MORRIS. I promise you we will, ma'am —I mean, mother. We are friends and brothers from this day.

MRS. L. (*to* EDWARD). All is ready for your departure, Morris. I would like

to have kept you for some days; but Mary says she must take you with her. Be a good boy; respect and love your father and mother, and help them in their work all you can. Remember me; and, be sure, I shall never forget you.

EDWARD (*throwing himself at her feet, and weeping convulsively*). Mamma—madam, grant me one favor, I implore. Oh! my heart is breaking.

MRS. L. (*with emotion*). What is it?

EDWARD. I cannot leave you. Keep me here, for pity's sake!. I will be your servant. I will wait on your son. I will obey him. I will obey every one in the house. Let me stay!—oh! let me stay!

MORRIS (*kneeling by him*). Oh! since you are my mother, be his mother, too! do not send him away. See! we ask it on our knees! You will have two sons, and he shall be the best.

MRS. L. (*aside to* MR. SHERWOOD). This

is killing me. I cannot bear it! I must speak! (*She covers her face, sobbing*).

Enter ANDREW, JANE, *and* PATRICK.

ANDREW. Mrs. Langdon, we come to make you an offer, which we beg you to agree to, or else we shall all three feel obliged to quit your service.

MRS. L. Well—what is it, Andrew?

ANDREW. Well, ma'am, it is that you will keep this poor little fellow, Morris, with you, and give us leave to treat him the same as Master Edward; and as we do not want any one to lose by this, we offer to have a third of our wages taken off, which you will please give to Mary and big Peter every month, to make up to them for the loss of their son's services.

EDWARD. Oh, my kind, generous friends! never will I forget this proof of your love!

MRS. L. But only this morning you

all three made terrible complaints about him.

ANDREW. But we don't bear malice, and he is so unhappy! We have forgotten all he did to annoy us. Please, ma'am, to keep him.

EDWARD. No, Andrew; you have taught me what is *my* duty. I belong to my father and mother, and I am ashamed that in my misery I forgot it. The poorer they are, the less I ought to leave them. Good-by, all my friends: love and protect Mrs. Langdon and my brother, and forget my many faults if you can. Good-by, Edward. Come, mother, let us go.

MRS. L. (*weeping*). Mr. Sherwood!

MR. S. Yes, it is enough. Embrace your son! he has proved himself worthy of you!

MRS. L. (*throwing her arms around him*). *My son, my darling!*

EDWARD (*amazed*). You, my mother! You!!

MRS. L. Yes, my son. This was only a plot to try you. Your heart has proved good and noble! and I am the happiest of mothers.

MORRIS (*rushing to Mary's arms*). And I—am I your son still?

MARY (*kissing him*). Yes, my boy; my own boy!

MORRIS. Oh, be joyful! how happy I am!

EDWARD. But, Morris, don't you want to stay with me?

MORRIS. No! no! I have been too much afraid already that I should never see my dear father again. What a good hug I mean to give him!

EDWARD (*giving* MORRIS *the watch, &c.*) Here, take all these things—now I give them to you.

MORRIS. Oh no, you must keep them.

EDWARD. But what about that cross old landlord?

MORRIS (*laughing*). You are right. Give them to me.

MARY. Is it for the rent? Why, big Peter will dance a jig on the kitchen table for joy.

MR. SHERWOOD. Good mothers, love your children with all your hearts, but do not spoil them. Remember, it is education and pious training which develop in their hearts the seeds of good or evil; and you, Edward, do not forget the lesson you have received, of "DOING UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD THAT OTHERS SHOULD DO UNTO YOU."

THE LITTLE PLAY MITTENS.

The play was finished amidst a tremendous clapping of hands, and the curtain fell.

Then the company began to talk just as fast as they could. They were astonished at seeing the play so well acted, and laughed over and over again when they recalled the comical little gardener and waiter, who wore such funny dresses, and knew their parts so perfectly, and acted with such serious faces. Minnie came in, too, for her share of praise,—indeed, every one was excellent; and when the children made their appearance a few minutes afterward—still dressed as they were in the play—they were received with more clap-

ping of hands, and this time with plenty of kisses too.

After that, some ice cream and cake were handed round; and then the company went home perfectly delighted, resolving in their own minds to get up something themselves in behalf of the soldiers. So certain is it, that one good action will prompt another.

The Little Mother hastily counted over the nice warm mittens with their thumbs and fingers sticking out in every direction, while the children looked on with breathless interest.

"Fifty-seven pairs," said the Little Mother.

"Fifty-seven pairs!" echoed the children, with a shout that made the windows rattle. "Oh, goody! goody! goody! how glad we are!" and they danced round the pile which lay on the floor in perfect ecstasies.

"How glad brother George will be!" said Willie.

"Oh, if he could only have been here to-night," said Clara, and her loving eyes filled with tears.

The Little Mother's lip trembled. She knew that her soldier boy, sooner or later, must know what a battle was; and a prayer rose in her heart that a Protecting Power would guard him from harm, and return him safe to her loving arms.

The children kissed her softly, and tenderly, and went quietly off to bed, almost forgetting that Santa Claus was to come that very night, and fill their stockings. But *he* did not forget; for when the bright morning sun of the clear, cold Christmas day, peeped in at the nursery windows, he certainly must have thought that Santa Claus had considered these children as pinks and patterns of perfection; for there were no less than three

new dolls; a grocery store for them to shop at; two elegant workboxes with "Anna" engraved on the lid of one, and "Clara" on the other; a beautiful writing desk, filled with nice pens, ink, and paper, for Johnny; a mahogany tool chest, completely filled, for Harry; an entire set of Cousin Alice's excellent and interesting books, for Bennie and Willie; a most charming little book, called "Our Little Girls," for Lillie; and two others by the same author, who is a minister's daughter, as good as she is lovely, for Minnie. These were called "A Little Leaven," and "Two Little Heaps;" and, let me tell you, Minnie considers them the best books that ever were written; while little Fanny's favorite was, and is, the "R. R. B's. It is the history of a dear little Robin Redbreast and his family; and Fanny says it is a "darling book."

The dear absent soldier brother was

not forgotten. On the table were two packages directed to him. One of these contained a dozen fine hem-stitched pocket handkerchiefs, with the initials of his name beautifully worked in a corner of each. This had been done by Anna, who was very skilful in such dainty arts. The other package consisted of a complete set of Dickens's works, in strong, plain, but very neat bindings.

"Oh," cried Harry. "George will stand on his head for joy, when he gets these; he will be so tickled! The very books he was longing to own!

"How *can* he stand on his head?" asked Bennie.

"This way," answered Harry, and going up to the side of the room, he suddenly lifted his feet in the air, resting them against the wall, and stared at Bennie with his face upside down, and the top of his head on the carpet.

The children laughed heartily, and as a matter of course, all the little brothers began to practise standing on their heads, till they nearly got fits of apoplexy, with the blood rushing the wrong way.

After they had returned from church that morning, every one of them wrote to George a company letter, wishing him a merry Christmas, telling him all the wonderful news about the little play; and informing him of the quantity of mittens which were coming. They had now finished eighteen pairs, to add to their fifty-seven, which their friends had given them. These seventy-five pairs, were to be sent away the next morning; but George's presents were to be carefully kept until his happy return home; for he could not put all those precious books in his knapsack; and as he might move from one place to another very often, the less he had to carry in marching, the better.

The smaller children felt an almost reverential affection for their soldier brother, who had gone away to fight for his country. They regarded his letters as perfect wonders, with Camp Ellsworth printed on the outside of them, and such superb capital D's and G's inside. The little ones did not know *how* he could make such splendid letters, sitting in a tent, with the paper on his knee, ready to drop it at a moment's warning, and flash fire and shot out of his gun, at the enemy. They were quite sure he would be a General in a very short time, and Johnny had serious thoughts of writing to the good President Lincoln, and asking him to make George one without waiting any longer. Indeed, he *did* write: but his mother thought it best not to send it: though I was sure the President would have liked it very much; for he is such a great-hearted, good man, such a pure

patriot; and I happen to know that he loves children dearly. Here is Johnny's letter. It is a simple, funny little epistle, full of trust and faith.

"PRESIDENT LINCOLN:

"*My Dear Friend*,—Do you know my big brother George? He is such a good boy! He never teazes us, or the cat, or anybody. Mary O'Reilly (that's our kitten) always rubs her coat against his legs when he comes home; so you see that is a sign that he is never cruel to animals. He once tried to teach a crab at Long Branch to dance the polka, but he didn't hurt it; no, indeed!

"Please, my dear friend, to make him a General, with a long sword, saddle, bridle, and a whack fol de rol; though I don't know what that is—I heard a soldier singing it—and I will come and hug and kiss you as hard as a rock.

"Clara and Anna say, they will hug and kiss you too, if you will make George a General; only you must promise not to scratch their faces with your beard, as papa sometimes does—just for fun, you know. Besides which, my dear friend, they will give you a mitten apiece. How would you like that? They make lots for the soldiers, out of skeins of long yarn; mamma says you are a famous fellow for spinning splendid yarns yourself. Ours is dark blue; but mamma says, yours are all the colors of the rainbow, and a great deal of black besides; and everybody is delighted with them, and all the soldiers love you, and I am your

"affectionate friend,

"JOHNNY."

I should not be in the least surprised, if the good President should answer this letter after he sees it here; and send his

answer to Mr. Appleton for Johnny. If he does, I will tell you all about it, as sure as my name is Aunt Fanny. Meanwhile, you must know that the fifty-seven "little play mittens," as the children called them, and the eighteen pairs, which they had made this time, and which they called their "two story mittens," have gone to the brave soldiers. Do tell me, my little darlings, how many have been sent altogether; now that we have come to the

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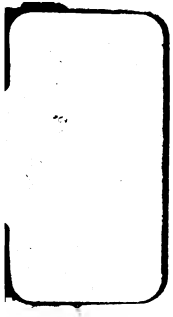
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